



Draft  
**Gaviota Coast**  
*Feasibility Study & Environmental Assessment*

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## ABSTRACT

The National Park Service (NPS) has prepared the Gaviota Coast Feasibility Study to determine whether all or part of the Gaviota Coast study area is suitable and feasible for designation as a unit of the National Park System. Congress authorized this study in 1999 in response to local requests. The study area covers a 76-mile stretch of coastal watersheds in Santa Barbara County, from Coal Oil Point to Point Sal, including all of Vandenberg Air Force Base.

Through the feasibility study process, the NPS has made the following determinations about the Gaviota Coast study area:

- The natural and cultural resources of the area are **nationally significant**, meeting all four of the NPS criteria for national significance.
- The area is **suitable for inclusion** in the National Park System, as it represents natural and cultural resource types that are not already adequately represented in the System or protected by another land managing entity.
- The area is **not a feasible addition** to the National Park System because sufficient land is not currently available to the NPS; strong opposition from study area landowners makes it unlikely that effective NPS management could occur; and the NPS is not able to undertake new management responsibilities of

this cost and magnitude, given current national financial priorities.

- While NPS management, if feasible, could contribute to the conservation of the area's resources, **management by organizations other than NPS is recommended.**

Two alternatives that do not include NPS management are considered feasible and are evaluated in an Environmental Assessment:

- **Alternative 1:** Continuation of Current Programs and Policies. This is the “no action” alternative for this study, and assumes that current programs, policies, conditions and trends would continue.
- **Alternative 2:** Enhanced Local and State Management. This alternative provides a menu of programs and tools that could be pursued by the local community.

The NPS prepared an Environmental Assessment to identify and analyze the potential environmental and socioeconomic consequences of each of the alternatives. Alternative 2 is considered the “environmentally preferred” alternative because it increases the local capacity for permanent land conservation, effective management of significant natural and cultural resources, and public understanding of the significance of the area.



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